

## Department of Veterans Affairs

## § 3.5

United States Code in effect on December 31, 1978, applicable to section 306 pension.

NOTE: The pension provisions of title 38, United States Code, as in effect on December 31, 1978, are available in any VA regional office.)

(4) *Improved death pension, Public Law 95-588.* A benefit payable by the Department of Veterans Affairs to a veteran's surviving spouse or child because of the veteran's nonservice-connected death. Payments are made monthly unless the amount of the annual benefit is less than 4 percent of the maximum annual rate payable to a veteran under 38 U.S.C. 1521(b), in which case payments may be made less frequently than monthly. Basic entitlement exists if:

(i) The veteran (as defined in § 3.1(d) and (d)(2)) had qualifying service as specified in paragraph (a)(3)(i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) of this section (38 U.S.C. 1541(a)); or

(ii) The veteran was, at time of death, receiving or entitled to receive compensation or retired pay for a service-connected disability based on service during a period of war. (The qualifying periods of war are specified in paragraph (a)(3) of this section.) (38 U.S.C. 1541(a)); and

(iii) The surviving spouse or child meets the net worth requirements of § 3.274 and has an annual income not in excess of the applicable maximum annual pension rate specified in §§ 3.23 and 3.24.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1541 and 1542).

CROSS REFERENCES: Section 306 pension. See § 3.1(u). Improved pension. See § 3.1(w). Improved pension rates. See § 3.23. Improved pension rates; surviving children. See § 3.24. Frequency of payment of improved pension. See § 3.30. Relationship of net worth to pension entitlement. See § 3.274.

[44 FR 45931, Aug. 6, 1979, as amended at 56 FR 19579, Apr. 29, 1991; 56 FR 22910, May 17, 1991; 56 FR 25044, June 3, 1991; 56 FR 57986, Nov. 15, 1991; 68 FR 34541, June 10, 2003]

### § 3.4 Compensation.

(a) *Compensation.* This term means a monthly payment made by the Department of Veterans Affairs to a veteran because of service-connected disability, or to a surviving spouse, child, or parent of a veteran because of the service-

connected death of the veteran occurring before January 1, 1957, or under the circumstances outlined in paragraph (c)(2) of this section. If the veteran was discharged or released from service, the discharge or release must have been under conditions other than dishonorable.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101(2), (13))

(b) *Disability compensation.* (1) Basic entitlement for a veteran exists if the veteran is disabled as the result of a personal injury or disease (including aggravation of a condition existing prior to service) while in active service if the injury or the disease was incurred or aggravated in line of duty.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1110, 1131)

(2) An additional amount of compensation may be payable for a spouse, child, and/or dependent parent where a veteran is entitled to compensation based on disability evaluated as 30 percent or more disabling.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1115)

(c) *Death compensation.* Basic entitlement exists for a surviving spouse, child or children, and dependent parent or parents if:

(1) The veteran died before January 1, 1957; or

(2) The veteran died on or after May 1, 1957, and before January 1, 1972, if at the time of death a policy of United States Government Life Insurance or National Service Life Insurance was in effect under waiver of premiums under 38 U.S.C. 1924 unless the waiver was granted under the first proviso of section 622(a) of the National Service Life Insurance Act of 1940, and the veteran died before return to military jurisdiction or within 120 days thereafter. (See § 3.5(d) as to Public Health Service.)

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1121, 1141)

[26 FR 1564, Feb. 24, 1961, as amended at 38 FR 21923, Aug. 14, 1973; 39 FR 34529, Sept. 26, 1974; 44 FR 22717, Apr. 17, 1979]

### § 3.5 Dependency and indemnity compensation.

(a) *Dependency and indemnity compensation.* This term means a monthly payment made by the Department of

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Veterans Affairs to a surviving spouse, child, or parent:

(1) Because of a service-connected death occurring after December 31, 1956, or

(2) Pursuant to the election of a surviving spouse, child, or parent, in the case of such a death occurring before January 1, 1957.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101 (14))

(b) *Entitlement.* Basic entitlement for a surviving spouse, child or children, and parent or parents of a veteran exists, if:

(1) Death occurred on or after January 1, 1957, except in the situation specified in § 3.4(c)(2); or

(2) Death occurred prior to January 1, 1957, and the claimant was receiving or eligible to receive death compensation on December 31, 1956 (or, as to a parent, would have been eligible except for income), under laws in effect on that date or who subsequently becomes eligible by reason of a death which occurred prior to January 1, 1957; or

(3) Death occurred on or after May 1, 1957, and before January 1, 1972, and the claimant had been ineligible to receive dependency and indemnity compensation because of the exception in subparagraph (1) of this paragraph. In such case dependency and indemnity compensation is payable upon election. (38 U.S.C. 410, 416, 417, Public Law 92-197, 85 Stat. 660)

(c) *Exclusiveness of remedy.* No person eligible for dependency and indemnity compensation by reason of a death occurring on or after January 1, 1957, shall be eligible by reason of such death for death pension or compensation under any other law administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, except that, effective November 2, 1994, a surviving spouse who is receiving dependency and indemnity compensation may elect to receive death pension instead of such compensation.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1317)

(d) *Group life insurance.* No dependency and indemnity compensation or death compensation shall be paid to any surviving spouse, child or parent based on the death of a commissioned officer of the Public Health Service, the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the En-

vironmental Science Services Administration, or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration occurring on or after May 1, 1957, if any amounts are payable under the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Act of 1954 (Pub. L. 598, 83d Cong., as amended) based on the same death.

(Authority: Sec. 501(c)(2), Pub. L. 881, 84th Cong. (70 Stat. 857), as amended by Sec. 13(u), Pub. L. 85-857; (72 Stat. 1266); Sec. 5, Pub. L. 91-621 (84 Stat. 1863))

(e) *Surviving spouses' rate.* (1) When death occurred on or after January 1, 1993, the monthly rate of dependency and indemnity compensation for a surviving spouse shall be the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(a)(1). This rate shall be increased by the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(a)(2) in the case of the death of a veteran who at the time of death was in receipt of or was entitled to receive (or but for the receipt of retired pay or retirement pay was entitled to receive) compensation for a service-connected disability that was evaluated as totally disabling for a continuous period of at least eight years immediately preceding death. In determining the eight year period, only periods during which the veteran was married to the surviving spouse shall be considered. The resulting rate is subject

to increase as provided in paragraphs (e) (3) and (4) of this section.

(2) The monthly rate of dependency and indemnity compensation for a surviving spouse when the death of the veteran occurred prior to January 1, 1993, is based on the "pay grade" of the veteran, unless the formula provided in paragraph (e)(1) of this section results in a greater monetary benefit. The Secretary of the concerned service department will certify the "pay grade" of the veteran and the certification will be binding on the Department of Veterans Affairs. The resulting rate is subject to increase as provided in paragraphs (e) (3) and (4) of this section.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1311(a) and 1321)

(3) If there is a surviving spouse with one or more children under the age of 18 (including a child not in the surviving spouse's actual or constructive custody and a child who is in active

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military, air, or naval service), the total amount payable shall be increased by the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(b) for each child.

(4) If the surviving spouse is determined to be in need of regular aid and attendance under the criteria in § 3.352 or is a patient in a nursing home, the total amount payable shall be increased by the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(c). If the surviving spouse does not qualify for the regular aid and attendance allowance but is housebound under the criteria in § 3.351(f), the total amount payable shall be increased by the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(d).

[29 FR 10396, July 25, 1964, as amended at 35 FR 18661, Dec. 9, 1970; 37 FR 6676, Apr. 1, 1972; 39 FR 34529, Sept. 26, 1974; 44 FR 22717, Apr. 17, 1979; 58 FR 25561, Apr. 27, 1993; 58 FR 27622, May 10, 1993; 60 FR 18355, Apr. 11, 1995]

### § 3.6 Duty periods.

(a) *Active military, naval, and air service.* This includes active duty, any period of active duty for training during which the individual concerned was disabled or died from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty, and any period of inactive duty training during which the individual concerned was disabled or died from an injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty or from an acute myocardial infarction, a cardiac arrest, or a cerebrovascular accident which occurred during such training.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101(24))

(b) *Active duty.* This means:

(1) Full-time duty in the Armed Forces, other than active duty for training;

(2) Full-time duty (other than for training purposes) as a commissioned officer of the Regular or Reserve Corps of the Public Health Service:

(i) On or after July 29, 1945, or

(ii) Before that date under circumstances affording entitlement to *full military benefits*, or

(iii) At any time, for the purposes of dependency and indemnity compensation.

(3) Full-time duty as a commissioned officer of the Coast and Geodetic Survey or of its successor agencies, the Environmental Science Services Ad-

ministration and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:

(i) On or after July 29, 1945, or

(ii) Before that date:

(a) While on transfer to one of the Armed Forces, or

(b) While, in time of war or national emergency declared by the President, assigned to duty on a project for one of the Armed Forces in an area determined by the Secretary of Defense to be of immediate military hazard, or

(c) In the Philippine Islands on December 7, 1941, and continuously in such islands thereafter, or

(iii) At any time, for the purposes of dependency and indemnity compensation.

(4) Service at any time as a cadet at the United States Military, Air Force, or Coast Guard Academy, or as a midshipman at the United States Naval Academy;

(5) Attendance at the preparatory schools of the United States Air Force Academy, the United States Military Academy, or the United States Naval Academy for enlisted active-duty members who are reassigned to a preparatory school without a release from active duty, and for other individuals who have a commitment to active duty in the Armed Forces that would be binding upon disenrollment from the preparatory school;

(6) Authorized travel to or from such duty or service; and

(7) A person discharged or released from a period of active duty, shall be deemed to have continued on active duty during the period of time immediately following the date of such discharge or release from such duty determined by the Secretary concerned to have been required for him or her to proceed to his or her home by the most direct route, and, in all instances, until midnight of the date of such discharge or release.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 106(c))

(c) *Active duty for training.* (1) Full-time duty in the Armed Forces performed by Reserves for training purposes;

(2) Full-time duty for training purposes performed as a commissioned officer of the Reserve Corps of the Public Health Service: